



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/080,682	02/25/2002	Veronique Henriot	612.41243X00	4685
20457	7590	01/20/2004	EXAMINER	
ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP			SINES, BRIAN J	
1300 NORTH SEVENTEENTH STREET				
SUITE 1800			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
ARLINGTON, VA 22209-9889			1743	

DATE MAILED: 01/20/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/080,682	HENRIOT ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Brian J. Sines	1743	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 December 2003.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____. 6) Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

The election restriction requirement has been withdrawn. Claims 1 – 5 have been rejoined for examination.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1 – 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Regarding claims 1 and 2, these claims recite a method for the continuous detection of thermodynamic hydrate formation conditions. However, the method fails to recite a specific method step regarding the detection or measuring of these conditions or physical parameters, which permit the determination or calculation of these thermodynamic hydrate formation conditions. Is the hydrate dissociation temperature determined by a measurement detection or calculation? What physical parameters are required to be measured so that the hydrate dissociation temperature may be determined using this method? How are these physical parameters measured? Furthermore, how is the particular lumping of the petroleum fluids carried out in order to isolate the hydrate forming components? How is the data relative to each of the particular fractions applied to each of the modules in order to determine at any point in the pipe the hydrate dissociation temperature? Regarding claim 2, how does the control device compare the temperature of the petroleum fluids with the determined hydrate dissociation temperature? How does the control device known when to apply the measures intended to fight

hydrate formation? What are the measures intended to fight hydrate formation? Is the temperature controlled and manipulated to control hydrate formation or is an additive added?

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1 – 5 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

The following is an examiner’s statement of reasons for allowance:

The cited prior art neither teach or fairly suggest a method intended for the continuous detection of thermodynamic hydrate formation conditions within a pipeline using a mechanistic hydrodynamic module and an integrated compositional thermodynamic module, as recited in claim 1, and including the application of measures intended to mitigate or eliminate hydrate formation, as recited in claim 2.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Fung *et al.* teach a method for reducing solids build-up in a hydrocarbon stream. Faille *et al.* teach a method for forming a simulation model of transient two-phase flows in pipelines. Toma *et al.* teach a method and apparatus for use in determining a property of a multiphase fluid. Pauchon *et al.* teach a method for modeling multiphase flows in pipelines. Thomas *et al.* teach a process for reducing the agglomeration tendency of hydrates in pipelines.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian J. Sines, Ph.D. whose telephone number is (571) 272-1263. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (11:30 AM - 8 PM EST).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill A. Warden can be reached on (571) 272-1267. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is not available.


Jill Warden
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1700